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WHAT'S IN THE RECORD

Carey changes charter

Churches on the move

'Reflection lake' returns

Kid's page

THE BAPTIST Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

Mississippians witness in Scandinavia

By Mike Crewell
Foreign Mission Board

ESKILTUNA, Sweden — Saturday morning shoppers at the main downtown shopping mall here were surprised to hear a soaring voice proclaiming strongly in song that Jesus Christ is Lord.

It was the voice of Judith Swanberg of Laurel, one of 93 Southern Baptists who were participating in a 10-day Partnership Evangelism campaign in 21 cities across Sweden during late October.

Across the hall a man sold lottery tickets and to the left, new automobiles were on display.

Dozens of shoppers halted, bags in hands, to hear the team of Americans sing and testify of their faith in Jesus Christ.

Most Swedish citizens understand English, but Hakan Persson, pastor of the local Elim Baptist Church, also translated their remarks into Swedish.

Swanberg's husband Don told shoppers how his faith in Christ helped him during the Korean War.

Team members witnessed, passed out Bible portions and tracts and talked to many people during the morning. Judith introduced one family from Iraq to the pastor — and they later attended the church.

The Swanbergs are members of First Church, Laurel, where Don, a retired pilot, teaches Sunday School, works with the television ministry, and sings in the choir.

The visit to Sweden was special for him because his grand-

preached, his wife presented her testimony, and Middleton sang and taught children songs during one Sunday service.

Jerry Wise is pastor of Fentress Church, Choctaw Association, and Edwina Wise is a diet consultant.

serves as deacon and Sunday School teacher.

Although precise statistics were not available, scores of Swedish people indicated they wanted to become Christians and scores of church members rededicated their lives to Christ.

The Southern Baptists led church services, preached on the street and in shopping centers, held music concerts, and distributed thousands of Bible portions and evangelistic tracts during the campaign.

The Sweden campaign was coordinated by W.H. "Dub" and Doris Jackson, crusade coordinators for the Foreign Mission Board in Western Europe.

Jackson said he and Swedish Baptist leaders are praying that the response they saw is the beginning of a spiritual revival for the nation of Sweden, where church growth has been slow in recent years.

Swedish Baptists number about 42,000. The Baptist Union of Sweden has about 19,000 members in 240 churches.

The Orebro Mission, which split from the union around 1940, has 23,000 members in 160 churches. Both groups participated in the partnership campaign.

Jackson is currently enlisting 500 Southern Baptists for a similar partnership evangelism campaign in France May 22-June 3, 1997. It will be the biggest such campaign Southern Baptists have ever held in France.

Southern Baptists interested in participating in that effort should contact the Foreign Mission Board, P. O. Box 6767, Richmond, Va. 23230.



Judith Swanberg, a member of First Church, Laurel, sings to shoppers in the mall in downtown Eskiltuna, Sweden. Swanberg and her husband Don were part of a 10-day partnership evangelism campaign in the Scandinavian country. (FMB photo by Mike Creswell)

parents came to America from Sweden, and he still speaks some Swedish.

Judith, a retired teacher, also teaches Sunday School and sings in the choir.

A visit to the local maximum security prison was a highlight of the week for Don. Hakan Persson works there as chaplain.

"He is doing an exceptional job," Don said.

Jerry and Edwina Wise of Ackerman, and Nell Middleton of Winona, served in Soederstaellje, near Stockholm. Wise

The team kept a busy schedule during nine days, speaking to three churches, three meetings for children and their parents, several hospitals, and youth events.

Chester R. Cook of Waynesboro served in Goeteborg, a city on Sweden's southwestern coast where Volvo automobiles are made. The team there saw three people come forward to accept Christ as their personal Savior.

Cook is a member of Calvary Church, Waynesboro, where he

Churches going country

People who like their music with more than a little bit of twang to it may find their hearts skip a beat when they hear about the latest trend making its way through Southern Baptist churches. Country music — long associated with honky-tonks, steel guitars, and big hair — is gradually making a place for itself in worship services.

Around 120 people from around the nation attended the National Country Music Church Conference in Branson, Mo., in early November. The three-day conference, sponsored by the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board (HMB) in Atlanta, featured country gospel bands from across the country and several guest speakers.

J.V. Thomas, national consultant in key church strategy for HMB, said, "By definition, a country music church is having church and using country music." He sees the country music church as a means of spreading the news of Jesus Christ in ways never before dreamed.

Looking back

10 years ago

Ninety-eight Mission Friends and their leaders from 13 Gulf Coast Association churches meet at the beachfront campus of William Carey College on the Coast for the third Mission Friends Morning. Sue Perry serves as the associational Mission Friends director.

10 years ago

In response to a ruling by the Mississippi Supreme Court that declared state pornography laws to be too broad, the 1,306 registered messengers at the 141st Mississippi Baptist Convention adopt a resolution calling for effective legislation against pornography.

10 years ago

A group of pastors and laymen from 10 Mississippi Baptist churches present D. A. McCall, Executive Secretary-Treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, with a bi-plane, dedicated as "The Gospel Flyer." McCall is a licensed pilot.

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK



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The only solution to alcohol advertising

For once, the liquor lobby has a good point.

Now, peel yourself off the ceiling and hear me out. Perhaps you'll agree.

Most of us are aware that the hard liquor industry, hiding behind the benign-sounding "Distilled Spirits Council of America," has announced they are unilaterally eliminating the 48-year voluntary ban on radio and television liquor advertising.

On that issue, I couldn't disagree more strongly. If you're Southern Baptist — if you're a Christian — anything that compounds the human tragedy of alcohol in our society should be deeply troubling.

Seagram, the Canadian alcohol conglomerate, broke the voluntary ban earlier this year when they broadcast hard liquor ads on a Texas television station at the same time high school seniors in the area were celebrating graduation.

Interestingly, the Seagram ads had a graduation theme.

It doesn't take a marketing genius to explain what's happening. Mainstream news media have documented the slow, steady decline in hard liquor consumption in the U.S.

Health-conscious people who are concerned about things like fat intake and cholesterol levels are waking up to the deleterious effects of alcohol consumption.

Since many people are moderating their intake of alcohol, more people must be persuaded to drink in order to maintain market share.

It's also a cruel component of the alcohol business that if market share is to be maintained, people who die from the abuse of alcohol must be replaced with younger people who have a lifetime of drinking ahead of them.

In other words, dropping the voluntary advertising ban is about money.

The corporate liquor giants who profit from the misery of alcohol are not willing to accept shrinking profits brought on by less consumption of this addictive, legal drug.

Hence, the ad ban is history.

The liquor lobby argues in their defense that America's airwaves are already saturated with alcohol advertisements.

Fred Meister, head of the Distilled Spirits Council, said in a recent "Nightline" episode on ABC that the members of his group simply want the same access to radio and television currently enjoyed by the manufacturers of beer and wine.

He stressed the fact that billions of dollars are already being spent for the electronic advertising of beer and wine, while hard-liquor products with virtually identical alcoholic content are being denied the same access.

It's true. About the only two places where beer and wine ads don't dominate television are Saturday morning cartoons and Sunday morning religious programming.

Nubile young models in string bikinis enjoy the delightful aspects of beer and beach volleyball. Sophisticated yuppies in designer clothes sample the wonders of the grape in trendy California restaurants.

America is drowning in alcohol advertisements. It's a disgrace.

Meister's altruistic solution, as proposed on "Nightline," is to clarify access to the airwaves: allow everyone to advertise their alcoholic products, or allow no one to advertise their alcoholic products.

On that last point, we should be in total agreement with Meister.

The best — the *only* — solution is to ban all alcohol advertisements, in print as well as broadcast.



The powerful lure to abuse that is alcohol advertising should be wiped out of our culture.

The techniques used to induce us to buy fast-food hamburgers and new cars should not be used to hook us on potentially destructive behavior like alcohol consumption (Pro. 20:1; Eph. 5:18).

The same goes for gambling and tobacco advertising, the other two debasements in our American addiction triad.

Let's get rid of them all. As Southern Baptists, we can set the example by practicing what we preach and staying away from those behaviors for which we have publicly expressed our opposition.

How realistic is such a far-fetched idea as banning alcohol advertisements?

Never forget — with God, all things are possible.

GUEST OPINION:



Sunday School is a strong gospel tool

By Keith Wilkinson, director
MBCB Sunday School Department

centralized and simplified strategy. As a church grows, the need to centralize and simplify becomes more critical.

It is easier to find leadership for a single organization that can fulfill the threefold tasks of outreach, assimilation, and teaching than it is for staffing three or more different organizations.

◆ Sunday School is familiar. People who have any church background or experience know something of what Sunday School is about.

A recent survey of 2,000 Southern Baptist churches found Sunday School organizations for all age groups in nearly 100% of the churches. Sunday School provides the potential organization for the team approaches needed in the

twenty-first century.

◆ Sunday School provides a solid foundation for innovation. Sunday School leads as an innovative concept of lay involvement.

◆ Sunday School incorporates the six principles of church growth into one organization: the process principle; the new unit principle; the leadership principle;

The homogeneity principle (reaching people with whom we share common bonds); the receptivity principle (people involved in Bible study become more receptive to the gospel); and the pyramid principle.

The pyramid principle suggests that to build a higher pyramid, one must of first necessity expand the base.

◆ Sunday School is a natur-

al companion to an exciting worship service.

The strength of what happens on Sunday morning comes from the combination of worship that begins in small group Bible study and continues in a service of praise and proclamation.

◆ Sunday School gets people involved in service.

◆ Sunday School provides the small group experience every Christian needs.

Through small groups people become assimilated into the life and ministry of the church.

◆ Sunday School is not tied to a single personality.

◆ Sunday School has a proven track record. Year in and year out, the Sunday School structure, properly used, has given solid results.

As I observe Mississippi churches, I find those churches experiencing cutting-edge growth focus their vision and emphasis through Sunday Schools.

Let's get them plugged in! For more information, contact the Sunday School Department, Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone: (601) 968-3800 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651.

During his pastorate of First Church, Norfolk, Va., Hemphill reached the conclusion that Sunday School still outshone other efforts in becoming the best growth tool of the future.

He cites nine reasons for his enthusiastic endorsement of Sunday School's role in future growth:

◆ Sunday School provides a

William Carey trustees approve charter changes

Trustees of William Carey College (WCC) in Hattiesburg voted Nov. 7 to bring the Baptist-affiliated school's charter into compliance with actions taken Oct. 29 by messengers to the 1996 annual session of the Mississippi Baptist Convention (MBC).

Trustees approved an amended and restated articles of incorporation which provide for new WCC trustees to be jointly nominated by the existing trustees and the Mississippi Baptist Convention nominating committee, as permitted by the 1996 MBC messengers.

However, the WCC trustees went a step further by inserting

a clause that states if a joint nominee is not approved, the vacancy will be filled through a "duly approved Convention constitutional trustee appointment process."

Ben Carlisle, pastor of Arlington Heights Church in Pascagoula and newly-elected chairman of the WCC board of trustees, pointed out that the new document does not alter the mission of the college and is "in no way contrary to our relationship with MBC."

"The phrase, 'through a duly approved Convention constitutional trustee appointment process' is intended to make it clear that if a vacancy exists on

the board that the messengers to the annual meeting of the MBC will have the ultimate authority to elect a trustee for such a vacancy," he said.

The amended charter also allows the WCC board of trustees to increase to a maximum of 24 members at the discretion of the board, as specified by the 1996 messengers.

On Oct. 10, WCC trustees adopted the Covenant of Cooperation between individual trustees and MBC that commits trustees to keep the college "Christian in purpose... solid in its business practices... compassionate in its ministry, and our judgement as near the

mind of Christ as possible."

Trustees of the other four MBC institutions have also been requested to sign the Covenant of Cooperation.

In other business, Bay Springs businessman Joseph Fail was elected WCC board vice-chair during the Nov. 7 meeting.

THE SECOND FRONT PAGE

THE BAPTIST Record

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Florida to define cooperating churches

LAKELAND, Fla. — Messengers to Florida Baptists' annual meeting in Lakeland on Nov. 11-13 approved parameters for churches and associations desiring to cooperate with the Florida Baptist Convention.

Passage of the bylaw to define a cooperating Florida Baptist church followed a spirited 45-minute discussion.

The document offers theological standards as a "yardstick to measure cooperation," said John Sullivan, executive director-treasurer of the

Florida Baptist Convention, Inc., an agency of the state convention.

"We must identify who we are as Baptists," Sullivan told messengers. "You cannot be a Baptist and believe anything you want to believe."

The bylaw lists four parameters that churches requesting "at-large status" — those which do not affiliate with a local

association — must agree to before they can be considered for affiliation with the state

convention. The parameters of cooperation include:

- theological.
- declaration.
- financial.
- statistical.

Under the theological parameter, an at-large church seeking affiliation with the state convention must have in its "governing documents, a declaration that the basis for its theology, faith, practice and polity is the Bible, with the 'Baptist Faith and Message, Revised 1963, or any other declaration of faith which parallels the tenets of our historic Baptist faith, as the theological framework."

In addition, the church must declare "by an affirmative vote" of the membership its intent and commitment to cooperate with the convention; contribute a minimum of \$250 annually through the Cooperative Program; and provide an annual church statistical profile that demonstrates its statewide cooperation and partnership with other Florida Baptist churches.

While the bylaw is intended to deal with at-large churches, the document states the "desire of the state convention to encourage any existing cooperating church, which does not presently fulfill the parameters of cooperation, to do so."

Dan Southerland, president of the State Board of Missions, said the bylaw change is needed because the convention presently has no definition of a cooperating church or association.

"As it stands now,"

Southerland said, "a church that donates \$250 to the Cooperative Program" is eligible to hold membership in the Florida Baptist Convention and the Southern Baptist Convention.

Southerland presented the bylaw changes recommended by the State Board of Missions.

Don Walton, director of missions for Pasco

Association, opposed the revision, saying the bylaw would erode the historic Baptist principle of freedom.

"My point of concern is, once we have given the state convention the power to define what is a cooperating church, what is to prevent the state from drawing more lines in the sand and further limit our freedoms?" Walton asked.

Messengers voted down an attempt to refer the recommendation back to the convention's State Board of Missions for further study.

Ed Gilman, director of missions for Suncoast Association in St. Petersburg, told messengers he made the motion on behalf of directors of missions who approved it prior to the annual meeting.

Gilman said referring the document back to the state board would give it "a broader base of support."

Florida Baptists' annual meeting in The Lakeland Center drew 1,719 messengers and 287 visitors.

SBC president seeking input for committees

DEL CITY, Okla. (BP) — Southern Baptist Convention President Tom Elliff has issued a request for Baptists' input in the selection of four key SBC committees he is responsible for appointing.

"We are experiencing our greatest days of growth and ministry through the Cooperative Program," Elliff noted in a letter to state Baptist convention presidents, executive directors, and editors. "Southern Baptists will expect, and rightly so, that our committee members be men and women of fervent spirit who endorse and appreciate with all their heart our SBC work, as supported through the Cooperative Program."

Elliff invited the leaders to "encourage the people in your state conventions to assist us in this process" by submitting recommendations on a form available from his office. His address is: Tom Elliff, First Southern Baptist Church, P.O. Box 15039, Del City, OK 73155.

The SBC committees to be appointed by Elliff are 1) the Committee on Committees, 2) the Resolutions Committee, 3) the Credentials Committee and 4) the Tellers Committee.

Elliff said individuals recommended for service should possess the following qualities:

"1) A personal relationship with Christ illustrated by a consistent daily walk with him.

"2) A clear commitment to the view that the Bible is the inerrant and infallible Word of God.

"3) A Christian walk and commitment acknowledged by his or her peers.

"4) A deep and unequivocal commitment to the work of our Southern Baptist Convention as supported through the Cooperative Program and our annual SBC offerings.

"5) An understanding that any responsibility with our SBC is a place of service rather than 'positional glory.'

Elliff wrote, "I assure you that each name submitted will receive prayerful consideration. It is understandable, of course, that with the great number of names submitted, there will be those who, though eminently qualified, may not be chosen to serve this year but may very well be considered for subsequent appointment."

Parkway Church sees ministry revived

By Carl M. White
Associate Editor

Second in a series

Sunday, September 29, 1996 was a new day in the life of Parkway Church, Metro Association.

After being in temporary facilities for 26 months, members moved into a new facility on 46 acres of land off I-20 in Clinton.

This completed a process that began almost from the time Ken Anderson became pastor in July 1990.

Parkway has finished what almost a dozen other churches in Mississippi are currently going through — relocation. (See box on this page.)

Mississippi Baptist churches do not often relocate. After the investment of dollars and lives are made in a location, pulling up and moving to new facilities is a difficult consideration.

The reasons a church relocates varies. Some are seeking growing room. Others are responding to the pressures created by community transition.

Transition is a way of saying a community is experiencing change.

While change is a fact of life in every community, sometimes the changes are so extensive it forces people and institutions to reevaluate their presence and purpose in a community.

These changes can be racial, economic or social.

Transitional forces have caused over a half-dozen churches to relocate southward from Memphis to Mississippi.

John Perkins, director of missions for the Northwest Association, in Hernando which borders Memphis, identifies at least eight churches that have moved from Memphis south to DeSoto County in the past decade.

Trinity Church of South Haven, one of the fast growing churches in Mississippi, is the result of the merger of three Memphis churches.

Just recently, Boulevard Church left Memphis and made application to join Northwest Association.

Members are meeting in temporary facilities while building a new facility on Church Road at Interstate 55.

The community around Parkway underwent a racial transition. As the membership of the church moved off to the suburbs, African-Americans moved into the surrounding community.

Churches in transitional communities often experience five negative trends:

- decline in membership.
- decline in attendance.
- loss of leadership.
- discouragement.
- budget uncertainties.

Parkway experienced all five negative trends, Anderson said.

"We did not move (from West Capital Street in Jackson) because we wanted to, but because we needed to," he said.

Parkway attempted to minister to the changing neighborhood, calling an African-American staff member in the summer of 1993.

"He led a neighborhood ministry that enrolled 225 children on the first day," Anderson said.

Parkway also opened up their recreational building for neighborhood youth to play basketball.

The church tried to do the right thing, but kept running into problems, Anderson observed.

"It was a long, volatile summer," Anderson remembered.

For three years the church had sought to sell the West Capital Street property.

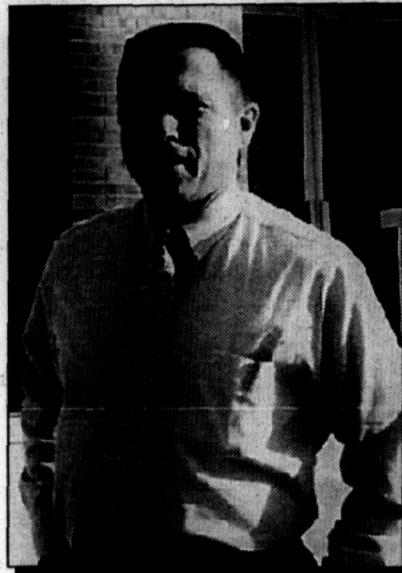
They approached church, government, and industry leaders

but had not found an interested buyer.

"We were told that we could never sell our property," Anderson said.

It seemed to be true.

Through the Home Mission Board, Parkway invited Tom



Ken Anderson

Roote of New Orleans Seminary to do a Professional Assistance to Church in Transition (PACT) study.

"This was the best thing we did," Anderson said.

"He (Roote) helped us take a critical self-evaluation and to determine what we needed to do," Anderson added.

After the PACT study, they turned the property over to the Lord, he said.

"We prayed for someone who could and would minister to this community effectively," Anderson said.

About that time, Marcus Butler, pastor of the Amazing Institutional Church of God in Christ (AICGC), inquired about

the church property.

Butler had been looking at it for some time.

"He even came one day without any of us being aware of it and prayed on the property," Anderson said.

Immediately after the sale was finalized, teams from AICGC started going door to door, reaching out to the neighborhood.

Some thought Parkway should have stayed and tried to minister to the surrounding community.

Anderson points out that during the last four years at the West Capital Street location, the church had to reduce staff, close buildings and scale down ministries because of tight money.

Three security guards had to be on duty for each service so people would feel safe.

"If Parkway had not moved, we would probably still be there, but we could never have ministered effectively to this community.

"We believe the Lord brought us together with AICGC. Our ministry objective did not fit with the location of the facility. Theirs did," Anderson said.

It was like the passing of the mantel of community ministry from one church to another.

For Parkway, the move was a spiritually enriching experience.

It took a tremendous amount of cooperation and patience, Anderson noted.

"For two years we were spread out in four or five buildings, from the Mississippi College campus to other places in Clinton," he said.

"It was a unifying experience," he added.

Southern Baptist transitional record is mixed, NOBTS professor reports

By Carl M. White
Associate Editor

Tom Roote is ambivalent about whether churches in transitional communities should stay or relocate.

Roote, assistant professor of church administration at New Orleans Seminary, was formerly director of missions in Birmingham for over 20 years.

During his time in Birmingham, 54 inner city churches faced the difficult situation of neighborhood transition.

Of the 54 churches, eight to ten relocated successfully while five or six stayed where they were and continued to function at various levels of effectiveness, he estimated.

The rest dwindled away and either died or are still dying, Roote observed.

"Most churches are not going to be able to make it in a transitional community," he said.

Churches in transitional communities go through a painful death process.

"The people in these churches are grieving because they know the church is dying," Roote said.

Roote was involved in the establishment of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board's Professional Assistance for Churches in Transition (PACT) program.

PACT "is a planning approach, where demographics and church data are analyzed and given to the church to mobilize the church's leadership into responsible decision making," Roote said.

Roote believes the ideal is for a church to minister in the community in which God plants it.

"The Lord knew what a community was going to be like when he planted a church there. I believe he would want a church to continue ministering

to that community," he said.

However, in his experience with churches in transition, Roote cannot point to many success stories.

"We (Southern Baptists) have not been successful in transitional communities.

"We have not solved the problem of the transitional church," Roote said.

For information on PACT, contact the Missions Extension and Associational Administration Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB).

For building consultation, contact Matt Buckles, consultant in the MBCB Church Administration/Pastoral Ministries Department.

Both departments can be reached at P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone: (601) 968-3800 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651.

Relocating churches in Mississippi

BOWMAR AVE. CHURCH, VICKSBURG. Terry White, pastor
BROADMOOR CHURCH, Metro Association. Jim Futral, pastor
CLOVERDALE CHURCH, NATCHEZ. David McGuffie, pastor
EASTHAVEN CHURCH, BROOKHAVEN. Bendon Ginn, pastor
FIRST CHURCH, BILOXI. Frank Gunn, pastor
FIRST CHURCH, BRANDON. Gene Henderson, pastor
FIRST CHURCH, FLOWOOD. Ricky Gray, pastor
GOODYEAR CHURCH, PICAYUNE. Arlis F. Grice, pastor
HARRIESBURG CHURCH, TUPELO. Forrest Sheffield, pastor
MAIN STREET CHURCH, HATTIESBURG. Russell Bush, Jr, pastor
TEMPLE CHURCH, HATTIESBURG. Dean Register, pastor

SBC restructuring severance approved

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP) — The severance benefits package has been approved for employees of Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) agencies who will not be employed by the new North American Mission Board (NAMB).

The number of employees to be released as the result of the merger of the Brotherhood Commission, the Radio and Television Commission (RTVC), and the Home Mission Board (HMB) into NAMB has not been announced.

Earlier reports said a "considerable" number of the 500 employees of the three agencies would not be employed by NAMB when it officially becomes a part of the SBC in June 1997, as part of a convention-wide restructuring begun in 1995.

Jack Johnson, RTVC president and chairman of the nine-

member Logistics Transition Team (LTT) for NAMB, said the severance package was approved at a Nov. 14 meeting of the LTT in Fort Worth, Texas.

He described the package as "completed in the spirit of generosity. However, we understand the pain the employee will feel who learns he or she no longer has a job. We feel we have done everything possible in the severance area to be supportive of each person."

Citing the staff reductions as "imminent, before the end of 1996," Johnson said each employee will receive individual counsel and will have the opportunity to ask questions and receive clarification related to options and severance benefits.

Those eligible for severance benefits include Brotherhood, RTVC, and HMB employees who are notified that due to restructuring they will have no

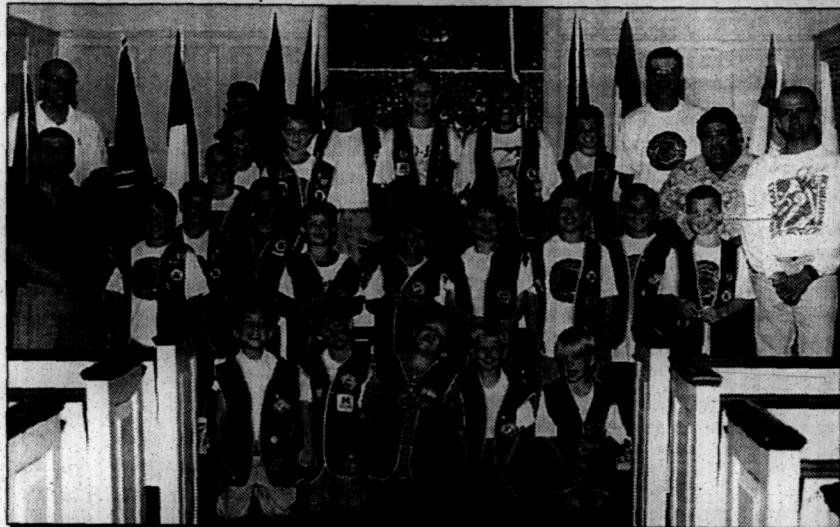
job available at their current location; or employees who are offered a job with NAMB at a lower pay level.

Employees who will not have placement will be given four weeks' notice before their termination date. Severance policies could be continued

through Dec. 31, 1997, because of the transition process.

If an employee is offered a position at NAMB and declines, he or she will be ineligible for NAMB employment as a full-time employee or as a consultant for a period of one year after the termination date.

JUST FOR THE RECORD



RAs at First Church, Hazlehurst, recently received awards for their achievements for the year. Pictured, from left, front row, are Trey Fisher, Stephen Bozeman, Dillon Sturgis, Seth Cliburn, and Alex Guess; second row, William Little (leader), Clark Little, Michael Newman, Hunter Sturgis, Joshua Scruggs, Phillip Douglas, D. J. Cliburn, Chase Davis, Jake Guess, Jay Keywood, and Jerry Keywood (leader); third row, Art Stevens (leader), Nick Newman, Phil Walker, Randle Scruggs, Eric Walker, Lucas De La Riva, Lee Walker, Brandon Brooks, Stephen Assink, Randy Hankins (director), and Pete De La Riva (leader).



GA's, Carterville Church, Petal

Carterville Church, Petal, held a GA/Acteen Recognition Service on Sept. 3. The theme was "Journey to Excellence." Fifty-four GAs were awarded their Missions Adventures badges. Three of the girls received pendants for completing all six Missions Adventures.

Six Acteens were involved in the recognition service. Pictured below, from left are Rhea Sloan, Kristi Rounsville, Megan Carley, Rebecca Lofton, Julie Roberts, Queens; and Nita Rainey, Queen Regent. Leland M. Hogan is pastor.



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NAMES IN THE NEWS



Meaux

Eastside Church, Magee, recently licensed **Eugene Jason Meaux** to the ministry. He is a student at William Carey College and the son of Mr. and Mrs. E. J. Meaux of Mendenhall. Pictured with Meaux is Harvey Tingle, pastor.

The board of trustees of Oak Hill Baptist Academy at Mouth of Wilson, Va., voted to name an outdoor center being developed at the school in honor of a distinguished alumnus, **J. Ralph Noonkester**, class of 1940. To recognize Noonkester's contributions to Mississippi and especially Hattiesburg, the pavilion will be named The Mississippi Pavilion.



Sessums

Hope Church, Lena. Pictured from left are Parkes Marler, interim pastor, and Sessums.



Smith

Mary Alice Smith was presented a plaque from **First Church, Oxford**, in recognition of her 45 years of service in Sunday School with first-graders. Pictured with Smith are Tom Atwood, pastor, and Robert Allen, minister of education and administration.

James Sessums was ordained on Nov. 3 at **Good**

Euclatubba Church, Saltillo, honored **John Hearn**, pastor, on Nov. 10 with a monetary gift for Pastor Appreciation Day. The church also ordained **Scott Witcher** to the ministry on Oct. 6. Witcher is presently serving as associate pastor and minister of youth and music. Geoffrey Wayner, who recently surrendered to the ministry, and his wife Debbie are serving as ministers to the children's church.

David Irwin was ordained as a deacon at **Star Church, Star**, on Sept. 8. Pictured from left are Victor Bowman, pastor; Martha Bowman; Von Irwin; and David Irwin.

Leila Mae Runnels Webb, 76, died Nov. 19 from complications during heart surgery at St. Dominic Hospital, Jackson. Services were held Nov. 21 at First Church, Jackson, with burial in Lakewood South Cemetery.

Webb, a native of Brandon, lived in Jackson from 1960-1972 when her husband, the



Ruth McMillan was presented a plaque from First Church, Oxford, in recognition of her 48 years of service as Bible Drill leader. Pictured are Tom Atwood, pastor; McMillan; Jennie Overstreet, associational winner; Susan Dempsey, assistant leader; Will Brown, associational winner; J. K. Wakefield and Joseph Rhea, state winners. Not pictured, Rebecca Mize, church winner; Dudley Carter, Brandon Cullum, and Barkley Falkner, state winners. Lynndy Fitts received \$1,000 scholarship to Mississippi College for Bible Drill participation.

late Allen O. Webb, was pastor of Daniel Memorial Church. She moved to Pascagoula in 1972 and returned to Jackson in 1994. She was an active member of

First Church, Jackson. She is survived by three children: Jim and Ron Webb, and Ann Webb Bridges; sisters, Eloise Smith and Mamie Duncan; and six grandchildren.

Walter Frederick, pastor of Calvary in West Point, dies

Walter Frederick, pastor of Calvary Church, West Point, died Nov. 9 at Methodist Hospital in Jackson of a heart attack.



Frederick

Frederick, 57, was a native of Russellville, Ala. Frederick had carried a group of international students from Mississippi State University to Camp Garaywa in Clinton. Witnesses said

Frederick, who had a history of heart disease, appeared to freeze and then collapsed.

Funeral services were held Nov. 11 at Calvary Church. Services were also held on Nov. 11 in Tuscumbia, Ala.

Frederick began his ministry in Bogalusa, La. He also served at Muscle Shoals, Ala., and Siloam Church, West Point.

He is survived by a wife Gloria C. Frederick of West Point; a daughter, Traci Hart of Jasper, Ala.; a son, Walter Huel Frederick Jr. of Tuscumbia, Ala.; three grandchildren; and five brothers.



Charles Mayo

Faith Church, Ovett, held a licensing service for Charles Mayo (above) and Tony Stroud (below) on Aug. 11. Ordination services were held the following Sunday.



Tony Stroud

 Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention



Send The Light

Join fellow Southern Baptists as they are appointed to carry the gospel light into a dark world.

**First Baptist Church
Jackson, Mississippi
December 8 * 6:30 p.m.**

'Christmas on Reflection Lake' returns Dec. 13-29

The second season of "Christmas of Reflection Lake" near Oxford will be presented at 7 p.m. nightly beginning on Dec. 13 and running through Dec. 29, according to sponsor Lanny Autry of New Albany.

Autry said "Christmas on

Reflection Lake" is an outgrowth of "Christmas in the Cottonpatch," a popular event that was started in the 1950's and taken up by him when the originators were no longer physically able to present the long-running drama.

"Christmas on Reflection Lake" is our annual celebration of the birth, life, death, and resurrection of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

"Shown nightly during the Christmas season, this musical drama using Reflection Lake as

the stage and the woods and hills around the lake as the backdrop, ministers to young and old alike.

"As a Christmas gift from our family to other families, the purpose of this ministry is to help families rediscover the wonder, joy, and real meaning of Christmas," Autry said.

Guests can view the drama from a two-story, glass front building that faces the lake. There is no admission charge, but donations will be accepted to help cover costs involved in the production.

The location of "Christmas on Reflection Lake" is #297, CR 244, Oxford — midway between Oxford and New Albany just off State Highway 30.

Travel on State Highway 30 from either Oxford or New Albany. CR 244 is not a cross-road, so there is only one direction in which to turn. The site is about three miles from State Highway 30.

Beginning in early December, direction signs will be posted.

"The unique setting, the unusual presentation, and the span of time covered by 'Christmas in the Cotton Patch' and 'Christmas on Reflection Lake' make this probably one of the most outstanding Christmas offerings in our state or even our nation.

"The work crew and directors are busy getting everything in place for this special time.

"The live characters are ready for their portrayals. The story is complimented with outstanding music and narration by local people," Autry said.

For more information, contact Lola Autry at Route 1, Box 218, Hickory Flat, MS 38633. Telephone: (601) 224-8518, or e-mail LMAWV@AOE.com.

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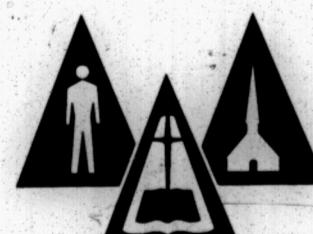
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Greens of Bond record 'Canyons of My Mind'

D.W. Green, pastor of Bond Church, Philadelphia, and his wife Ora have released a new music tape entitled, "Canyons of My Mind," with words and music to two songs written by the longtime Mississippi pastor.

Green, who has also authored and co-authored four books, has held a number of offices and served on several committees at Southern Baptist associational, state, and denominational levels.

He is a graduate of William Carey College in Hattiesburg, Southwestern

Seminary in Ft. Worth, and Luther Rice Seminary. He has also done graduate work at the University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg.

He currently serves as a volunteer chaplain at Neshoba County Hospital and Nursing Home in Philadelphia.

The Greens' tape is available at Baptist Book Store in Jackson and The Bible Book Store in Meridian.

For more information, contact Green at Route 3, Box 473, Philadelphia, MS 39350. Telephone: (601) 656-7379.



The Greens

JUST FOR THE RECORD



GA's, First Church, Hazlehurst

GAs of First Church, Hazlehurst, recently held a Recognition Service acknowledging their completion of Mission Adventure Activities. Recognized were (front row) Chelsea Williams, Kathryn Cartwright, Emily Higdon, and Rebecca Hankins; (second row) Lona Smith, Hannah Jordan, Katie Jackson, Rebecca Davidson, Tabitha Johnson, April Odom, Julie Hankins, Virginia Little, Brittany Newman, Laura Higdon, and

Stacy Odom; (third row) Jessica Floyd, Alice Claire Thompson, Olivia Gibson, Ashlea Brooks, Rachel Little, Ashley Newman, Laura Jackson, Erica Douglas, and Laura Stewart. Becky Bozeman is GA director. Leaders are Wendy Cartwright, Sherry Davis, and Rita Jackson. Robert M. Hanvey is pastor.

Griffith Memorial Church, Jackson, will present Greg Buchanan, harpist, in concert on Dec. 1 at 10:30 a.m. For more information, call the church office at (601) 372-7812.

North Batesville Church, Panola Association, set a goal for 250 in Sunday School on Miracle Day, Sunday, Oct. 1. The total attendance on Miracle Day for Sunday School was 334. When the annual report went into the association two years ago, the report showed less than 30 enrolled in Sunday School and an average weekly attendance of 22. The church has also earned the "Eagle Award" that will be presented in February at the annual Growth Spiral Conference. The pastorium and the education building



Wade Church, Wade, recently held its GA Recognition Service. Pictured from left, front row, are LeAnn Prill, Rachel Gammill, Briana Orozco, Tiffany Tanner, Rosalie Kendrick, and Emily Thompson; back row, Amanda Smith, Lindsay Beck, Ruth Stewart, Lori Roberts, Tinnin Colvin, Valerie Smith, and Amanda Wood. Not pictured were Kacee Bloodsworth, Laura Dobbe, and Lauren Peppel. Leaders are Judy Roberts, Cindy Dickerson, Teresa Brown, Janet Gammill, and Pat Saucier. Susan Barfield is WMU director. Bill Barton is pastor.

has been renovated and a new two story education building almost completed. Lee Hudson is pastor and Sam Lott is Sunday School director.



First Church, Wiggins

First Church, Wiggins, held its GA and Acteens Recognition Service on Aug. 11. Pictured from left, are Crown Bearer Samantha Kirkland, Queen Susan Pickering, Queen Martha Morrison, Crown Bearer Brittany Breland, Queen with Scepter Courtney Parsons, Scepter Bearer Malerie Lee, and Vickie Kirkland, fourth grade

"Seek and Ye Shall Find"
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Williamsville Church, Kosciusko, recently held a reception to honor choir members that have been a part of the music ministry of the church for 30 years or more. Those honored (pictured, front row) were Katherine Burns, Wanna Johnson, Judy Sims, and Mildred Lindsay; (second row) Doug Hubbard, minister of music, and Bill Tolleson. Allen Simpson is pastor.

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BRIARLAKE BAPTIST CHURCH, Decatur, Georgia is seeking a Minister of Activities. Education or experience in church recreation is preferred. Please send resume to: Chairman of Search Committee 3675 Norwich Drive, Tucker, Georgia 30084.

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THOMPSON BAPTIST CHURCH, Smithdale, MS, is seeking an individual for the position of Youth Minister. Resume may be sent to Thompson Baptist Church, 5422 N. Greensburg Rd., Smithdale, MS 39664.

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APPROXIMATELY 225 GOOD CONDITION copies of the 1975 Baptist Hymnal for sale. White color, \$4.00 each you pick up, or \$5.00 each delivered. Contact Kimberly Thompson, 1st Baptist Church, Terry, PO Box 159, Terry, MS 39170 or call (601) 878-5735.

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BSSB financial picture continues to brighten

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — A second consecutive year of positive financial results at the Baptist Sunday School Board (BSSB) translates into more ministry resources than ever before, according to Ted Warren, executive vice president and chief operating officer.

In an employee meeting in Nashville, Tenn., on Nov. 11, Warren said revenue of \$261,314,000 — a total \$13.5 million ahead of 1994-95 —

includes funds necessary to sustain current and future operation of ministries and to provide for new products and services.

The figures represent a second year of positive results following two years of anticipated losses during reorganization and actions to fix business problems.

At the same time, a planned 3% across-the-board literature price increase has been canceled.

Only the prices of some individual products will increase in instances of improvements in color or paper.

Also, the board will absorb increased costs in the transition in 1997 to seasonal quarters in response to requests from churches.

Production costs for the April-May issue will be approximately 81% of a three-month quarter, but prices will be held at 67% so that churches will pay the same cost per session for dated curriculum.

STAFF CHANGES

Bethel, Monticello, has called **Tim Morrison** as associate pastor, effective Nov. 3. A native of Birmingham, Ala., he received his education at Samford University and New Orleans Seminary. His previous place of service was First Church, Chilversburg, Ala.

Dan B. Wright has resigned at South Corinth Church, Corinth, due to illness. A native of Calhoun County, his previous places of service were in Calhoun, Webster, and Winston counties. His new address is 110 Deer Path Circle, Corinth, MS 38834, telephone: (601) 286-3492.

Timothy L. Martin, pastor of First Church, Nicholson, has accepted a call as pastor to Heritage Church in Cantonment, Fla.

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Preparing for campers

Rudy Hurst (left) of Woolmarket Church, Gulf Coast Association, chairman of the Campers on Mission (COM) RV Park Development Committee; Herb McDaniel, (center) also from Woolmarket Church; and Dan West, (right) manager of Central Hills Retreat near Kosciusko, supervise bulldozer work at Central Hills for an RV campground COM is developing. The campground will consist of 41 camping pads with full hookups, and a multi-purpose facility including bath houses, a laundry, and meeting rooms. For more information, contact West at (601) 289-9730 or Paul Harrell, director of the Brotherhood Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention at (601) 968-3800 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651. (Photo by Carl M. White)

BAPTIST COLLEGE NEWS

William Carey College honored **Karen Burns Gray** ('78) with the Distinguished Young Alumnus Award Nov. 16. A foreign missionary, Gray opened the House of Hope, an AIDS hospice in Vitoria, Brazil, in 1995.

Mississippi College Department of Music will present its 11th annual "Festival of Lights" on Dec. 6 and 7, 7:30 p.m. both nights in Spell Auditorium. For more information call (601) 925-3440.

The Center for Creative Scholars (CCS) at William Carey College conducts workshops to help parents and teachers better meet the creative and educational needs of gifted children. Trudy Abel is

administrative director of CCS and assistant professor of education; and Read Diket is executive director of CCS and director of the honors program and associate professor of art and education. For additional information about the Center for Creative Scholars call (601) 582-6191, 582-6205 or (800) 962-5991, ext. 191 or 205.

William Carey College honored **Marian Graham Thornton** on Nov. 15 with the Mississippi Woman's College Distinguished Alumna Award.

William Carey College honored **John J. McGraw** of Ellisville, with the Distinguished Alumna Award on Nov. 16. An orthopaedic surgeon at the Laurel Bone and Joint Clinic, McGraw has been involved with medical mission

trips to Haiti, Nigeria, Dominica, India, Honduras, and Kyrgyzstan, Russia.

The Winter School of Music of William Carey College will present Handel's "Messiah" on Dec. 6 at 7 p.m. in Dumas Smith Auditorium. For more information, call (601) 582-6192.

William Carey College's Alumni Association presented **W. A. Fordham, Petal**, with the 1996 Service Award at a luncheon on Nov. 16. Fordham, a retired pastor who spent two years at Oak Hill Church, Poplarville, and seven years at Napoleon Church, Picayune, later moved to First Church, Petal, where he served for 30 years.

William Carey College honored **J. V. McCrory, Hattiesburg**, with the Alumni Association's Recognition of Service Award at a luncheon on Nov. 16. McCrory, who retired from Carey in February after 33 years of service, has published "On the Edge," a volume of poetry.

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(I have sinned.)
2. I want to be forgiven for my sin and set free from eternal death.
(I repent.)
3. I believe Jesus died and rose from the grave to forgive my sins and to restore my relationship with you.
(I believe in Jesus.)
4. By faith, I invite Jesus Christ into my life. From this time on, I want to live in a loving relationship with Him.
(I receive Christ as my Savior and Lord.)

But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name
John 1:12

If you make a decision for Jesus Christ today, contact a local Baptist church for spiritual guidance.

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FAMILY BIBLE SERIES

Experience God's joy

Luke 1:5-13, 24-25, 59-64

The Bible teaches throughout that God blesses the heart that chooses to be faithful to his purposes. The lesson this week proves that point in a miraculous manner. Zechariah and Elizabeth were known for their commitment to God (v. 6). They knew that their hearts were right before God, but since they were childless there would have been those who could have thought otherwise. The gift of children in those days was equated with God's blessing.

The time came for the priestly division to which Zechariah belonged to serve in the temple. By the drawing of lots, Zechariah was selected to go into the temple to light incense on the altar to the Lord (vv. 8-9). Later it would

become obvious that God no doubt had selected this specific time for Zechariah to be where God could reveal to him that he and his wife would experience the miracle of childbirth. While carrying out his faithful duty to God, the angel Gabriel appeared with the revelation that Elizabeth would conceive and give birth to a son. He also revealed to him that he was to be given the name John. Does it not seem appropriate that God would make such a great thing known through the course of a worship experience?

Notice that Gabriel's message included a specific answer to an already specific prayer (v. 13). In



Jim Phillips

their faithful service to God, this couple had pleaded that God would bring forth a child to their union. I think we should be careful to note that not being able to have children is certainly not an indication of God withholding his blessing to a family. Their faithfulness to God remained constant regardless of whether or not their specific prayer was ever answered. However, when God did reveal their impending blessing, Gabriel pointed out that with the birth of their son there would also be a deep joy and delight (v. 14). No parent ever has such a guarantee. We all pray that our children will add joy to our lives but many a family has suffered great heartache and agony over the resulting outcome of their children's upbringing.

Following the time of her conception, Elizabeth's joy could hardly be contained (v. 25). Note

that she ascribed praise to God for the miracle that was coming into her life. Her self-imposed shame of not previously bearing a child was about to turn into inexpressible joy. Little did she know what a great role her son would play in the scheme of God's redemption of mankind. Her joy would be shared by all who were awaiting God's hand to move in bringing about the salvation of mankind.

The actual naming of the child presented their society with yet another evidence that God was in on the whole thing (vv. 59-64). It would have been expected that a first born son would have been given a family name or even the name of his father. When Zechariah revealed that his name was to be John, a minor wave of surprise moved across those gathered (v. 61). Zechariah however was rewarded with the loosening of his tongue which had been stopped due to his original response to Gabriel's revelation (v. 20). The very first words out of

his mouth were those of praise to God. His uncontrollable joy led to an overwhelming response of awe by those who were there to witness the baby's dedication to God (vv. 65-66). Though not a part of our lesson, the verses containing "Zechariah's Song" (vv. 67-79) adds to the overall experience of this new father's declaration of joy! There must have been an air of expectancy that God was about to do something great. And indeed God was. In just a few months God's own Son would burst onto the scene and only then would the other parts of the puzzle of John's miraculous birth come to be made clear.

God works in the lives of those who are faithful to him. Even when we don't feel as though anything great could ever happen to us, right then and there God could be bringing about a blessing from heaven that only he can deliver. Experience his joy!

Phillips is pastor, North Greenwood Church, Greenwood.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

Spiritual fruitfulness

Matthew 13:1-52

Matthew 13 records a group of parables of Jesus often referred to as parables of the kingdom. In these parables Jesus taught valuable lessons about the Kingdom of Heaven. The parable of the sower, also known as the parable of the soils, is the longest parable within this collection.

The Setting (13:1-2). Jesus constantly attracted attention wherever he went. Crowds flocked to hear him preach and to see him do wondrous things. One day Jesus sat in a boat at the edge of the Sea of Galilee and waited for the crowd to gather. Then he taught them in parables, simple stories about people and problems that were familiar but at the same time full of meaning.

The Parable (13:3-8). The content of the parable of the sower is simple. A sower went out to sow.



Ronald Bishop

It was common in Jesus' time for farmers to go to the field and cast seed upon the ground. They would broadcast by hand seed from a sack tied around the neck or waist. The seed probably was wheat or barley seed that would be used for food. As the sower walked and cast seed, the seed fell in a variety of places. The farmer surely had prepared the ground to receive the seed. However, there were places that were impossible to prepare. Though not by design, some of the seed fell into those places.

Some seed fell onto the path. The path was hard, packed dirt that had frequent traffic of humans and animals. Since the path was devoid of undergrowth, the seeds that fell onto it were

spotted easily by birds searching for a meal. Other seeds fell onto soil that was filled with rocks. The seeds had only a thin layer of topsoil in which to grow. The topsoil prompted quick germination, but without depth the plants could not establish roots. They soon were scorched by the sun and died. The field also had patches of thorn bushes. Some seeds fell among the thorns. Since the thorns had a head start on the new seeds, the seeds never stood a chance. The already-strong thorns choked the new plants out. Other seeds fell on the good ground that the farmer had prepared for cultivation. The result was that the seeds sprouted and grew strong, producing fruit. Some produced a hundred seeds per stalk. Others produced sixty. Still others produced thirty.

The Hard Soil: Unfruitful (13:18-19). Jesus explained the parable to his followers who did not understand. Each of the types

of soil represents a type of person to whom the word of the kingdom is announced. Some people are hard-packed, just like the path. They have been the way they are for years and years. They have become immune to the idea of being productive and receptive. When they receive the word, it is easy for the evil one to snatch the word away. The result is that when these people hear the word of God, they are generally unresponsive, since they listen just as readily to the evil one.

The Stony Soil: Unfruitful (13:20-21). The stony soil represents the person who responds with great emotion to the gospel, but does not persevere and make the gospel a way of life. It is easy to become excited about any good news. Yet, when one learns of the great demands that often accompany a good thing, discouragement may set in. The stony soil could germinate seeds, but it could not nurture plants. Immature people who have never considered the cost of discipleship often fizz out after an

explosive liftoff.

The Thorn-infested Soil: Unfruitful (13:22). The thorns represent the cares of the world and the pursuit of riches that too often lead people to miss the value of the kingdom. People who have already set priorities and are unwilling to change them for the sake of the gospel cannot be fruitful. The word of God is then choked out by their pre-established concerns.

The Good Soil: Fruitful (13:23). Despite all the wasted seed, much seed fell onto good soil. This soil had been tilled. Its stones were removed. Its weeds and thorns had been eliminated. This soil was fertile and ready to grow a crop. The seeds that fell here sprouted and produced much fruit.

Jesus expects his followers to be like the good soil. Eliminating thorns and stones is the responsibility of each believer. Only by doing this can one be characterized by spiritual fruitfulness.

Bishop teaches philosophy and religion at Jones County Junior College, Ellisville.



Cynthia Douglas

God to help you see yourself as He sees you.

Do not cheat (Amos 8:4-6). First, God charged Israel with social injustice by saying "you who swallow up the needy, and make the poor of the land fail" (v.4). Our American culture needs to be concerned for the helpless poor and for the system of help provided by government and church. Second, God charged Israel with commercial dishonesty. Dishonest business exchanges are against God's law and will result in His judgment (Read Lev. 19:36; Deut. 25:13-16). Third, God saw their indifference to holy days. Work was forbidden during the New Moon Festival and on the Sabbath. Yet they longed to be able to buy and sell dishonestly, even on holy days. God loved the poor in Israel and He is equally concerned for the poor today. He was concerned about their rights being protected. The poor were

being sold into slavery for insignificant debts such as a pair of sandals. Believers need to be honest in all their dealings and to be especially sensitive and helpful to those in need.

Do not oppress others (Jas. 5:1-6). The Bible does not condemn having wealth. In fact, Proverbs 10:22 says "wealth is a blessing of the Lord." However, James condemned those whose only motive was to accumulate wealth at any expense of others. Specifically in these verses, Jesus names the sins of withholding just wages, fraud, and causing the death of innocent people. James was saying wealth should not be gained by oppressing others in any way. He even said those who did oppress others were murderers!

What is the result of oppressing others to gain wealth? God knows our hearts and our motives. He will hold us accountable. All earthly treasures will eventually decay. Our hope is in heaven. Someone has said:

"For unbelievers, this world is all of heaven they will ever know. For believers, the sufferings of this world are all of hell they will ever know."

Work and share (Eph. 4:28). Paul summarized the basic teaching about theft by giving two commands: do not steal and work hard. This hard work will result in having enough to share with those who are in need. God intended for people to be busy with productive, constructive work. II Thessalonians 3:10b states: "If anyone will not work, neither shall he eat." Working, giving, and sharing are a part of God's plan for a happy, productive life.

Aren't you thankful to live in a country where we have the right to own personal possessions? Are you willing to evaluate your life to ascertain if any form of stealing exist? Are you generous in using your possessions to help others?

Douglas is a member of First Church, Columbus.

LIFE AND WORK

Stop! thief

Ex. 20; Amos 8; James 5; Eph. 4

How important are your personal possessions? What emotions do you feel when your home is burglarized or your car is stolen? Personally, I was angry, hostile, and hurt after our home was burglarized. We don't have to be taught to say "Mine!" - it comes naturally. The Bible gives guidelines for honoring the rights of others to personal possessions and the proper use of our possessions.

Do not steal (Ex. 20:15). This commandment states that God planned for the private ownership of property. Not only does the Old Testament condemn stealing property, it says withholding tithes and offerings is stealing (Mal. 3:8-10). Stealing has a twofold effect. First, it is a sin of disobedience to the One who cre-

ated and loves us. Second, stealing displays a lack of concern and love for others.

Stealing can be manifested in other ways than just taking someone else's property. What about political corruption when the rich prosper and the poor suffer? How about bribery in the business world? When one does not give the employer a honest day's work, isn't it stealing? When a person takes credit for someone else's ideas and work, isn't it stealing? When gossip ruins a good name, isn't it stealing? When we fail to tell the good news of Jesus, aren't we stealing a precious inheritance from someone? Let us examine our lives to see if the sin of stealing is a part of our lifestyle. Ask

LOVE ONE ANOTHER

Editor:

I saw religious commentator Cal Thomas on TV with Pat Robertson this week and he said, "America is now the evil empire." Robertson agreed with him. This pair are members of a political faction that wants a constitutional amendment to prohibit the burning of the American flag. If the flag represents an "evil empire," what's wrong with burning it?

Next summer, millions of little children across America will attend Vacation Bible School. A part of the opening ritual is the posting of the Christian flag and the American flag. When they say the pledge of allegiance to the American flag, should an adult be ready to point out that this represents the "evil empire?"

Seriously, are we going to hear from the so-called "conservative Christians" about this issue? They seem to have opinions about just about everything else. This morning, a woman called C-Span from Ft. Worth, crying and saying she was having a hard time finding a church she could attend because she is "liberal." Folks, the word "liberal" is in the Bible (KJV, Isaiah Chapter 32). I don't believe you will find the word "conservative."

Much of the evil in America is inspired by people who do religion (calling it Christianity) for money, sex, or political power. They have allied themselves with the polluters, the National Rifle Association, the alcohol pushers, and the tobacco kingpins.

Unfortunately, this gives Christianity a bad name and we have lost most of our credibility. Whatever happened to the command, "Love one another?"

Carl L. Hess
Ozark, Ala.

TAKE A STAND

Editor:

I commend "The Baptist Record" stand on the evils of gambling. My heart goes out to Gaylon (Oct. 24 and 31 issues) for stepping out on what gambling has done to her life: loss of family, humiliated in prostitution, and living in fear of using her real name.

Who's to blame? We all are when we don't take a stand and fight against what I have heard is the worst of all addictions.

Where are our law enforcement officials when there is child abuse going on in the parking lot of the casino—where these children are left along during the night hours with no food and no place to use the bathroom.

Why do our political figures (who we put in office) not take a stand against this type of stealing from the citizens of Mississippi?

God's children have a spiritual and moral obligation to take a

stand in demanding our law enforcement people and our political figures do what is right.

Gaylon, there is life after addiction. Don't give up. God tells us in his Word, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose" (Romans 8:28 KJV).

You can claim it again and in time, God will make a difference in your life. There are prayers going up for you right now and for others who have been led down this evil path.

Bobby Sue Miller
Grenada

THANKS FROM AIM

Editor:

During the summer of 1996 approximately 1,655 people accepted Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Saviour as a result of outreach efforts during the Olympic Games. Atlanta International Ministries (AIM) was formed to focus positive attention on the Christian faith during the Olympic and Paralympic Games. AIM is grateful for the volunteers from Mississippi because they are a vital part of this ministry.

As we hosted youth groups, adult groups, creative arts teams, and others, we were proud of the way in which they represented our Lord to Olympic and Paralympic visitors. We are thankful for their flexibility, their preparedness, and most of all for their commitment to missions.

We are already seeing fruits of their labor through salvation decisions, requests for Biblical materials, and the continuation of special event ministries started from Summer Games energy. Response cards have been returned to us from many international visitors who were able to hear about Jesus Christ during their visit to the Games.

Georgia Baptists were thrilled to have the opportunity to work alongside volunteers from many other states in this outreach project. We are thankful Mississippi volunteers were a part of this once-in-a-lifetime experience.

Linda Johnson, Ex. Director
AIM, Atlanta

TRUSTEES VIOLATE TRUST

Editor:

There is hurt, anger, confusion, and division among Mississippi Baptists. At the very bottom of this lies breach of trust. In 1994, a board of trustees assumed that an upcoming Mississippi Baptist Convention (MBC) would produce ... trustees to their board who would not conform to their ideological tenets.

Assuming this to be the case... (t)hey took the institution for themselves... Every effort of the leadership and the convention as a whole went toward salvaging at least some

prestige, power, place, and position. No one said the trustees had violated a sacred trust.

Now, in 1996, we've repeated our error. Needing to justify the position already taken with one of our institutions, we voted to have that same relationship with all our institutions. When Mississippi Baptists failed to preserve the expression of their principles... they sinned against God, their institutions, trustees, and themselves.

In the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord, I call upon:

— every board of trustees to refuse to "jointly nominate" its trustees. Trust your convention with your future and that of your institution.

— convention leaders to place the motion (including the "Covenant of Cooperation") into proper form to be adopted into the constitution and by-laws at the next convention, with the deletion of "That the sitting boards of trustees and the state Nominating Committee jointly produce for the Convention consideration the slate of trustees to be elected."

— all of us to repent and confess our corporate sin to God, and pledge anew to be people of integrity before the world and with each other.

Bobby T. Hood
Richton

CORNWALL STATS UNTRUE

Editor:

Our attention had been drawn via the "Baptist Times" in this country to reports recently published in "The Baptist Record" to the effect that the South-westernmost county of England is to be the focus for a group based in Clinton "taking the Gospel to Cornwall" (Oct. 3 issue).

The reports also give an extraordinarily misleading impression of Cornwall, and indeed of Southern England as a whole, as an area where the Christian church has miserably failed to take root and to fulfill her calling.

That those actively practicing the Christian faith and reflecting our Lord's love for the world are fewer in number than we pray for, we accept with regret.

We are not alone in the world in recognizing that truth. But to say either that "only one percent of the population professes to be Christian" or that "there are only five Baptist churches in the entire region" is simply untrue.

It is also unworthy for anyone purporting to give news to fellow Christians about the work of the kingdom of God and of those engaged in that enterprise.

These reports have saddened us and upset others here who have heard of them.

Trevor W. Davis, president
Devon & Cornwall Baptist
Corporation Ltd.
Exeter, England

HELP NEEDED IN GERMANY

Editor:

The Munich International Baptist Church is made up primarily of refugees from various African states. We have over 28 nations represented attending our services.

We are ministering to the needs of about 300 that attend our church.

If you have churches that need some projects this Christmas season, we have some needs here for substance and prayer.

We have had more than 30 come to Christ over the last 12 months.

On the 15th of December, we will be baptizing at least 13 and probably more.

Our church has only one American in it other than myself and wife Martha.

We are not an American military church. We are strictly international in our scope.

Many of our people are hard pressed for food and other needs. Martha and I try to feed them at least two good meals per month, and even that is very expensive.

We have 30 French speaking Christians who need to have the survival kit for new Christians.

We have to obtain them from France and they are very expensive at \$36 per copy. We need "Salvation Plan" marked Bibles in English, French, and German.

We could use help in the music department. We do not have a pianist, organist, or qualified music teacher.

We could use African-American ministers and teachers of survival kit, music, and Bible studies.

We could use an African-American minister who would be willing to come when we go on furlough in the spring of 1998.

There are thousands of refugees in Munich. Can you help?

Alvis Cooper, pastor
Munich Int. Baptist Church
Munich, Germany

NEW ADDRESS

Editor:

Jean and I serve as missionaries in Venezuela and enjoy receiving "The Baptist Record." We are the directors of the book deposit for the Casa Bautista de Publicaciones.

Our mission changed mail companies, and I need to give you a change of address:

Rev. Leon Champion, CCS
3014, P. O. Box 025323, Miami,
FL 33102-5323 (no packages).

We are graduates of Clarke College and William Carey College, and I was pastor in Mississippi for 12 years.

We still have a lot of contacts in Mississippi, and we would like for them to be able to write us.

Leon Champion
FMB missionary
Valencia, Venezuela



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Letters to the editor

Unsigned letters will not be printed. No multi-copy or form letters will be used.

Each correspondent must include an address and telephone number for verification. In special instances, name may be withheld at writer's request and editor's discretion.

Please include the name of cooperating Mississippi Baptist church where correspondent is a member. (While church membership is not required, Mississippi Baptists' letters will receive priority when space is limited.)

Letters must be limited to 250 words. All correspondence is subject to editing.

Correspondents should refrain from personal attacks.

No more than one letter from any individual will be printed during a three-month period.

When in the judgement of the editor a given issue has received sufficient attention, correspondence dealing with it will no longer be published and a notice will be printed to that effect.

MK life is never boring!

By Robin Kyzar

What is it like to be a missionary kid (MK)? It's hard to say—I have been one all my life! I was born on March 24, 1989 in San José, Costa Rica. I have two older brothers, a dog and a cat. I don't think it is much different being an MK because I like doing the same things you do.



In Costa Kyzar

Rica, I go to an American school (with one class in Spanish every day), take piano lessons, and ballet. Our church is very different from most of yours. It is very small. Of course, everything is in Spanish. Our pastor and my brother lead the music with their guitars and my mom plays the keyboard. We sing "coritos" (choruses) and some hymns too.

Vacations can be different there, too. Costa Rica has seven volcanoes and I have seen one erupt! We can also go to beach-

es on two oceans—the Pacific and the Caribbean. Costa Rica is famous for its rain forests and many strange and beautiful animals. Vacations are fun!

The city where I live, San José, has almost one million people.

It is the capital city and a very interesting place to live, but the traffic is horrible! The roads are very bumpy and full of potholes.

My friends are from many countries because my school is international. It is fun to know people from around the world and learn about their countries.

I like being an MK because I like to travel and my life is never boring!

•••

Robin is the daughter of Russell and Melinda Kyzar, Southern Baptist missionaries to Costa Rica, currently on furlough in Clinton. She is the granddaughter of Guy and Lois Henderson of Clinton, retired Southern Baptist missionaries to South Korea and Philippines.

Gifts each year to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for Foreign Missions help support missionary families like Robin's all over the world.

Dear Pen Pal Club,

Hi! My name is Jessica Renee Henderson, but sometimes people call me Jessi. I am eight and one half years old, and my birthday is November 16. I am a member of First Baptist Church. I go to D.T. Coxx Elementary school in Pontotoc. I am in the third grade. I have an older sister, a younger brother, and four hamsters. The hamsters are: a mommy, Hotty; a daddy, Totty; and two babies (girls). I like to swim, talk, play, fix my hair, and read. I would like a pen pal between seven and ten, but a boy or a girl will do!

Please write to:
1159 Sims Gin Rd.
Tupelo, MS 38801

Dear Pen Pal Club,

Hey! My name is Grant Brashier I live in Sebastopol. I am 14 years old. I attend Sebastopol Baptist Church. I am a Christian. I am in Bible Drills. I go to school at Sebastopol Attendance Center and I'm in the 9th grade. I love to write letters, visit my grandma, draw and paint, talk to friends and family, and listen to music. Christian and country are my favorite kinds, but I listen to almost anything. I especially like Amy Grant and Reba McEntire. I'll write anybody, but I'd prefer someone between the ages of 12 and 16.

Please write to:
P.O. Box 127
Sebastopol, MS 39359

Dear Pen Pal Club,

Hi! My name is Kristy Henderson. I am 12 years old. I go to Furrs Baptist Church in Pontotoc. I have one brother, one sister, and four hamsters. I go to Pontotoc Junior High where I am a

drummer. I am in the 7th grade. My birthday is January 19. My hobbies are playing and watching sports, reading, playing and listening to music, being outdoors, babysitting, hanging out with friends, and riding horses. I would like a pen pal; a boy or a girl will do.

Please write to:
1159 Sims Gin Rd.
Tupelo, MS 38801

Dear Pen Pal Club,

Hi! My name is Bridgett Mangum. I turn 13 Nov. 28. I have one brother. I like to play basketball, talk on the phone, and play baseball and other sports! I attend Pleasant Valley Baptist Church. I go to Mendenhall Jr. High. I'm in the 7th grade. I would like a boy or girl pen pal, any age will do!

Please write to:
991 Hwy 43 North
Mendenhall, MS 39114

Dear Pen Pal Club,

My name is Adam Martin. I am 12 years old. My birthday is Sept. 22. I like playing baseball I collect comics and like to listen to alternative music. I have one sister 15 years old. I go to Florence Middle School and Mt. Zion Church. I would like to hear from a boy or girl.

Please write to:
246 East Tucker Rd.
Florence, MS 39073

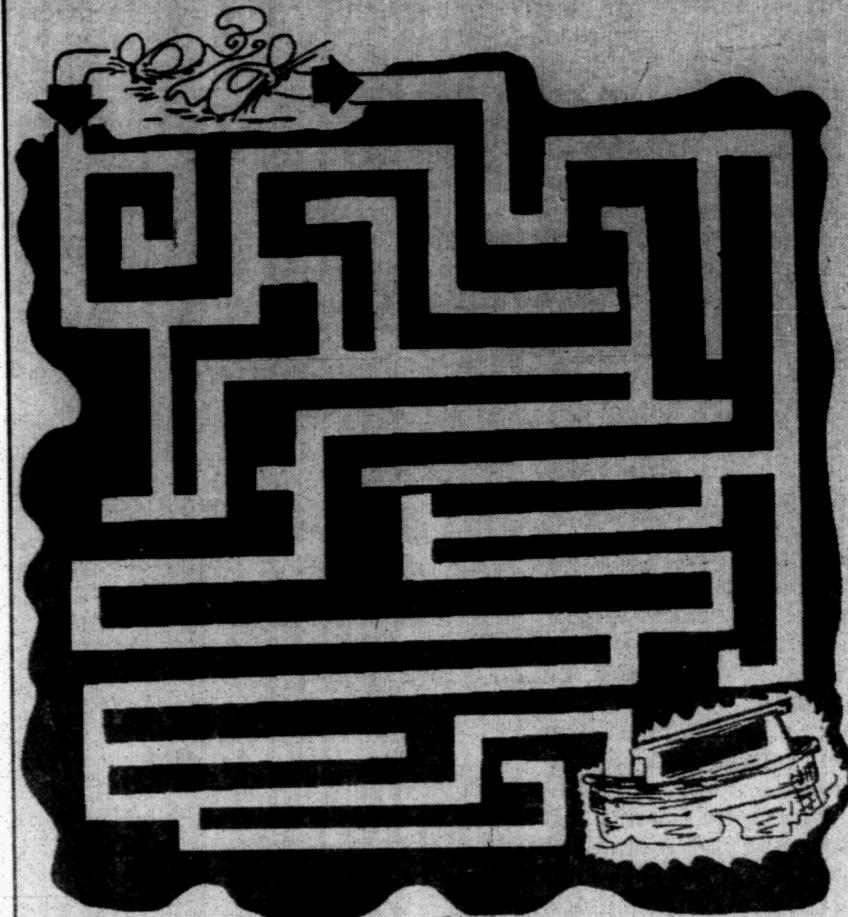
Dear Pen Pal Club,

Hi! My name is Amanda Mechelle Bray, I go to Sardis Lake Baptist Church. I have one brother and one sister. My birthday is August 19th. my hobbies are riding horses, swimming, riding bikes, and watching TV. I would like a girl or boy to write me.

Please write to:
Route 2, Box 612-D
Sardis, MS 38666

THE MICE ARE MISSING!!

This pair of mice has been chosen by Noah to join the animals in the ark, but they have wandered off for one last juicy meal, and now they are lost!! Help them get back to the ark.



Source: The Big Book of Bible Games and Puzzles by Joy MacKenzie & Shirley Bedee (Zondervan Publishing House, 1982), available at your local bookstore or by calling 800-727-3480



Bibliocipher

By Charles Marx
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WCN UL ZUVT UL
GSXSOQSH ROZ, NF
NRSZ EUQS RS AFKSG
NF WSXFZS NRS LFVL
FD EFH, SQSV NF NRSZ
NRUN WSJOSQS FV ROL
VUZS
IFRV FVS: NKSJQS

Clue: I equals Y
Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Romans ten nine

LifeAnswers



Ron Mumbover, Ph.D.
Minister of Counseling
First Church, Jackson

My husband seldom gambles, but when he does he has no self-control. How can I keep him out of casinos or at least help him control himself?

First of all, is your husband reaching out for help? It is impossible to keep an addict away from his addiction unless he wants help. The fact that he seldom gambles is not as much the issue as the fact that he cannot stop once he gets started. That will cause many more problems down the road. You should strongly encourage your husband to talk with his pastor, a Christian counselor, or a trusted friend about this problem. If he refuses to do so, pray that he will have a change of heart. Affirm him when he does exercise self-control and when his self-control means that there is enough money to manage the household without difficulty. Self-control is a fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-25) that is essential to the smooth running of a relationship. Your husband must understand that exhibiting self-control is a witness to you, his children, and others who look

up to him for Christian leadership. Lack of self-control will bring surely disruption and destruction.

My teenaged son has taken up "dipping" because of peer pressure, and all my pleas have fallen on deaf ears. I'm a single mother; what should I do?

Your son feels like a grown-up when he dips, and that is why he ignores your pleas. Pray for your son. Lift him up to the Father and ask the Lord to speak to his heart. Arrange for him to spend time with men who will model their Christianity around him. There are a lot of youngsters out there like this boy, and we Christian men must step up and help them into manhood. We can be Sunday School teachers, coaches, or simply encouragers for these young men. Mom, talk with your son in love about making right decisions before the Lord, and not before his peers. Encourage him to make right decisions and stand by him as he makes his way through these difficult and trying days in search of maturity.

Send your counseling questions to LifeAnswers c/o The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Please be brief. Name is not required. Remember: in time of crisis, your pastor can make recommendations on your counseling needs.